

"Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons."

*Popular Mechanics, 1949*

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U.S. Army  
**CEALS**  
Corps of Engineers Automated Legal System





## CEALS Leaps onto the Superhighway

Yes, CEALS has gone "on the net"... Our site opened officially for business in July of last year. At that time, the CALR and the WDOL links were announced. Since that time, accessing the CEALS home page has become a daily visit for more than 3,000 users. Even the White House is accessing their needed wage rates via our home page.

Internet has quickly become a household word. Not only are you able to locate any type of information within a few minutes, you can also make purchases, download and store information and send e-mail. Best of all, with any browser software, the Internet is so easy to use - even a 6-year old can be taught how to use it.

This issue of the CEALS Newsletter is devoted to our recent Internet developments. In an attempt to reach our goal for 2001, CEALS is once again leading the federal government in providing critical information to users online.

The most notable development in the past year has been the Wage Determinations On Line Site (see article, page 3). This site is in the process of being deployed across DoD.

Online access to many legal services publications are being provided on the Internet in PDF format, and many more are coming. Remember those old legal services Manager directories that were published back in the '80s? Well, they'll be arriving on the Net later this year, "updated and prettified." In addition, check out the Legal Services Deskbook as it continues to grow with a wide-range of helpful information and resources to assist the working attorney.

And we're not stopping there. Currently under development -- the District Restructuring Roadmap site and the Legal Opinions database -- will soon be "open for business" on the CEALS home page.

So fasten your seatbelt. *Here we go...*

**"According to David Osborne, an expert on reinventing government and author of *Banishing Bureaucracy*, all sorts of public sector organizations at the federal, state and local levels are dramatically changing how they operate and deliver services. Says Osborne, 'the driving force behind government redesign and reinvention is technology.' And more often than not, that technology is in the form of web-based applications aimed at providing users with more information, streamlining internal processes or both."**

*CIO Magazine, April 1, 1997*



## Wage Determinations On Line (WDOL) System

Perhaps one of the most vexing issues for those engaged in federal service and construction contract activities has been the seemingly chronic tension between the dynamics of acquisition reform and the timely incorporation of Department of Labor's prevailing wage determinations under the Service Contract and Davis-Bacon Acts. With the increasing emphasis upon electronic contracting and the compression of acquisition timelines, contracting agencies have been increasingly challenged to place procurements "on the fast track." In recent years, such efforts have been frustrated by an inability to receive statutorily required wage determinations for such procurements. The Wage Determination On Line (WDOL) system is the direct result of reinvention efforts undertaken in response to these challenges.

The WDOL system allows all DOD contracting components with Internet access to obtain required Service Contract Act (SCA) and Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) wage determinations electronically, reducing wage rate availability waiting time in the case of the SCA, for example, from over 100 days to mere minutes. In addition, it has been estimated that the WDOL system will generate approximately \$1.6 million in annual savings for the Department of Defense (DOD) while simultaneously enhancing the labor standards protections to thousands of workers performing on DOD contracts. In order to fully appreciate the impact of the WDOL system, it is perhaps appropriate to briefly outline the requirements of the SCA and the DBA.

The SCA requires Federal contracting agencies to request from DOL and subsequently incorporate new or revised SCA wage determinations in contracts for

services for each solicitation, award, or modification to exercise an option, extend, or change the scope of work. With relatively minor exceptions, the SCA WD request process had been virtually unchanged for more than twenty years. Contracting agencies obtained the wage determination from the DOL by submitting a request for each service contract action. Current DOL's regulations (29 CFR 4.4) allow the DOL up to 60 days within which to respond to an agency's request for a WD.

Perhaps the most-frequently cited problem associated with the SCA request process has been the lack of timely DOL responses to contracting agency requests. Because of the compression of time lines associated with an increasingly automated acquisition process and because contracts subject to the SCA must contain a wage determination, the credibility of the SCA request process had been severely undermined. As a result of a series of inter-agency agreements between the DOL and the Departments of Army, Air Force and Navy in April of 1996, the DOL authorized these DOD elements to obtain SCA wage determinations electronically. Although the SF 98, *Notice of Intention To Make a Service Contract* requirement remains, the agreement with DOL provides that such notice can now be filed at the time the contracting officer accesses the required SCA wage determination. Before addressing the means of such electronic access, we need to briefly focus on the provisions of the DBA.

The DBA requires Federal contracting activities to incorporate new or revised wage determinations for construction contracts. The process by which

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**WDOL** (continued from page 2)

contracting agencies obtain DBA wage determinations differs from that established for SCA wage determinations insofar as the DBA wage determinations are generally issued for general application rather than in response to individual requests. The DOL's DBA wage determinations are most commonly obtained through annual subscriptions to the Government Printing Office's Publication, *General Wage Determinations Issued Under the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts*. Since these wage determinations are more volatile than the SCA wage determinations, they are revised or modified with greater frequency. Changes to these wage determinations are issued in weekly transmittals.

In 1993, as an alternative to the GPO's subscription service wherein replacement pages are mailed to subscribers on a weekly basis, the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) initiated its electronic access subscription through its FedWorld gateway.

In order to provide for the electronic access described in the agreement with the DOL, the Departments of Army, Navy and Air Force and the Defense Logistics Agency entered into a subsequent agreement with NTIS for access to both the SCA and the DBA Wage determination databases. Each of the participating DOD agencies recognized that a DOD-wide system of access would be both pragmatic and cost-effective if

an existing DOD networked system could assure availability, capability and ease of use. The CEALS WebSite (<http://www.ceals.usace.army.mil>), which provides access to both NTIS DBA and SCA WD Databases throughout its legal offices, became the prototype for DOD-wide access. Among the various value-added enhancements to the existing CEALS system was the incorporation of a Windows-based search engine which significantly enhances user search and access capabilities. As a result, the USACE CEALS system has maximized access to required DBA and SCA WD databases through links from the existing Air Force Contracting WebSite and elsewhere within affected DOD components.

In order to measure the extent of DOD utilization of this system, a "counter" system was incorporated within the CEALS WebSite to record the number of accesses to the WDOL system. In the first month of operation, there were 41,069 separate "hits" to the system. A review of those hits discloses increasingly widespread use of the system within DOD. It is clear that this system has provided DOD with the means to more effectively integrate a well-established socio-economic policy (labor standards protection) within the framework of acquisition reform. Insofar as SCA wage determinations are more accessible, the SCA wage determination request process is more credible and ultimately more effective.





## Adobe Acrobat PDF: Save the Postage

Those of you who have been on the Internet looking for information and documents to download have probably encountered “pdf” files along the way. PDF stands for “Portable Document Format” -- a format by which information providers can publish information *electronically* and make documents, drawings, sound, and video footage easily available to their readers and clients by way of the Internet, E-Mail, CD-ROM or floppy disk. PDF is true to its name -- it truly makes documents “portable” across a multitude of computing environments. The PDF formatting technology was developed by Adobe, Inc., and is created with a product called Adobe Acrobat which takes a document in any file format (MS Word, WordPerfect, Pagemaker, Harvard Graphics, Powerpoint, Lotus, Excel, etc.) and “prints” a PDF version of the document that can be shared. The only software one needs to read, copy or print these PDF files is a product called Adobe AcrobatReader -- which is a freebie off the Internet (at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)).

Why is PDF so popular? Well, it not only allows the developer to publish a document electronically, but the PDF document retains the exact format and characteristics as the original version, including all color, special fonts, graphics, diagrams, photographs, etc. This means that instead of the information proponent having to rely on a copier or printing company to generate hard copies of documents to distribute, they can simply create PDF versions of the documents and send these PDF files electronically to their readership. The readership can then use the Acrobat Reader to read, copy or print the document off locally. This process can save thousands of dollars in manpower, mailing, printing and storage costs, not to mention the time savings involved in distribution.

How does the PDF process work? The following is a scenario involving two players in the PDF process -- Information Proponent and the Reader.

**The Information Proponent.** Mr. Green has a 25-page annual report replete with color graphs and charts, photos of the company president and the company logo appearing at the top of every page. The report was created and saved as a Microsoft Word document, with some Excel spreadsheets and Powerpoint slides thrown in for illustration. Its about 75 pages in length. Mr. Green wants to make this annual report available to the company staff spread out among 79 offices worldwide. Not all offices use Microsoft products, so he can’t just send out a Microsoft Word document in E-Mail.

Enter Adobe Acrobat! Mr. Green opens his annual report in Microsoft Word, does a File... Print... on the Annual Report file and selects “Acrobat PDF Writer” as the printer. Acrobat generates a PDF version of the Annual Report that Mr. Green sends out on E-Mail and also posts on the company’s home page on the Internet. The process of creating and distributing the PDF file to the 79 company offices has taken about 20 minutes from start to finish.

**The Reader:** The 79 company offices receive an E-Mail from Mr. Green with the Annual Report in PDF format as an attachment. They have also been notified that the report is on the Home Page for access as well. Two months ago, the staff was directed to download the free Adobe Acrobat Reader from the Internet and install it on their local PCs. Since then, they have been using the software within their local offices to distribute wiring diagrams, organization charts, technical drawings of products under development, and local newsletters. When Mr. Green’s Annual Report E-Mail arrives, the users save the Annual Report PDF file to disk and then startup the Acrobat Reader to view and/or print the report. Before Mr. Green sent the PDF file, he identified

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**ACROBAT** *(continued from page 4)*

“Bookmarks” within the report that identify separate chapters and illustrations -- sort or like a Table of Contents. When the users pull up the Report with the Acrobat Reader, they can click on the Bookmarks button and then click on any Chapter or Illustration reference to jump to that section of the Report. The entire report is searchable on any word or phrase within the Acrobat Reader. In addition, all color graphs remain intact, all photos retain their resolution and image, all fonts are left unchanged and the total format of the Report is preserved. It is as if they received a “printed” copy of the report in their computer! No conversions or retailoring of the document had to be performed by the readership. Further, the Acrobat Reader allows the user to copy any text or graphic element from the Report into another Windows application. If someone wishes to view the report on the Internet -- say they are on a trip or at home -- they can just click on the link for the Annual Report on the company’s web server. The browser software will immediately recognize the link as a PDF file, and automatically startup the Acrobat Reader software on the local PC so the user can easily read, copy or print the report. (NOTE: Browsers such as Netscape or MS Inet Explorer have to be configured at the time of Acrobat reader installation to associate .pdf file extensions with the Acrobat Reader software.)

How is PDF publishing affecting the Corps? The Corps is moving out in creating repositories of legacy documents -- Engineering Circulars, Regulations, etc., - on the Internet to reduce printing costs and warehouse storage space. Existing documents are being converted to PDF format and are being stored in Corps “Libraries”

on the CRREL Web Server (address: <http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/usace-docs/>) However, the Corps Legal Services Webmasters (Patty Vatter, Jan Manwiller and Robert Henson) have already been publishing documents in PDF format. CEALS has placed the sample MIPR forms on the CALR Page in PDF. The Legal Services Home Page hosts the 6th Worldwide Conference Report, CEALS Newsletters, the Awards Program Brochure and Model Project Cooperation Agreements in PDF format. The Legal Services Deskbook houses SAD’s Bid Protest Decisions in PDF, as well as the slides used in the 1996 Fiscal Law Workshop. In the future, look for more publications, CEALS User’s Guides, etc., copies of your CALR SF-1080 bills and usage statistics.

If this article has tweaked your interest in publishing in PDF on the local level, here’s some good news. The Directorate of Information Management has done an initial purchase of Adobe products, to include Adobe Acrobat, Adobe Pagemaker and Adobe Capture (which will capture hard copy documents through a scanner and convert them to PDF publications) and will be providing licensed copies of these products to the HQs, Division, District and Center offices Corps-wide. If you are interested in obtaining one of these copies, contact your local IM department.

If you don’t already have the Adobe Acrobat Reader, you can download a free copy *of it from the Adobe Web Site at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)*. No internet user should be without it!



## WebFLITE

Access to WebFLITE via the INTERNET is now available to all agencies of the federal government on a reimbursable basis. WebFLITE is operated by the Air Force Legal Services Agency (AFLSA/JASL). WebFLITE gives you the ability to conduct full-text searches, through more than 100 legal databases covering topics from agency to zoning. The user must have a "browser", such as Netscape, or Internet Explorer, or Mosaic. The browser allows the user to simply point and click. There is no need to remember commands and database names as they are available from pull-down menus.

The fees are as follows \$50 per month per user for subscriptions less than one year. Subscription costs are as follows:

# of Users	Fee Per User
1 - 4	\$500.00
5 - 10	\$450.00

The following CD-ROM products are also available from AFLSA/JASL:

Decisions of the Comptroller General	\$150.00
TJAG Disk Release 2 -- Aug 1995 (Contains U.S. Code)	\$ 75.00

In the near future, the CD-Rom's will be searchable using a browser just like WebFLITE. This will make access and use much easier for infrequent users of the system.

To order either the on-line service or CD subscriptions, please contact the CEALS Project Office, ATTN: Alease Berry, telephone 703-428-6674. WebFLITE is just one of the five Computer Assisted Legal Research (CALR) services offered to you thru the CEALS Program.

Questions concerning the various databases on WebFLITE or additional information about the cd-rom services, please contact AFLSA/JASL directly. Their telephone number is 334-953-3008.

### The CEALS Challenge:

... the name of the new Matter Tracking System.

Submit your entries to the CEALS Project Office (E-Mail: CEALS) NLT June 15th. The winning entry will be selected based on originality, creativity and applicability.

***No entries bearing the letters C-M-I-S will be considered.***



## Legal Services Deskbook

This issue of the CEALS Newsletter marks the first anniversary of the Legal Services Deskbook sponsored by Seattle District Office of Counsel. During the first year, we have witnessed the Internet grow at an astounding rate. Virtually every day new legal resources come on-line. And, as the Internet has grown, so has the Deskbook. It now consists of over 3,000 files that cover virtually every area of our practice. Among other things, you will find:

- HQUSACE Guidance Memos
- AGC Reports
- JAG School Deskbooks
- Form Bank
- Selected Executive Orders
- Recent Federal Decisions (over 150 cases)
- Selected Federal Register Notices
- Court and Board Rules
- Counsel Functions Database
- Research & Writing Aides
- Checklists

Most of the Corps legal community has already visited our web site. For those who are new to the web, you can find us at the following URL:

**<http://137.161.248.42>**

The concept behind the Deskbook is simple. First, we are attempting to create a corporate information database so that we can avoid re-inventing the wheel. Second, we want to capture corporate knowledge so

that when one of our corporate legal experts leaves Government service, we do not lose all of his or her expertise and knowledge. Third, we believe a deskbook on the Internet is the most efficient way to publish and share information within the COE legal community. Obviously, the Deskbook is only as useful as the information it contains. Thus, the more data we input, the more useful it becomes.

As we enter our second year of operation, we hope that many of you will decide to actively participate in the creation and maintenance of the Deskbook and will begin to view this effort as a corporate resource. We would like to hear from individuals who would be willing to maintain or update specific areas of the Deskbook, or who have materials that we could publish in the Deskbook to help flesh out areas that need a little more beef. In addition, we encourage your suggestions on how to make this resource more useful. Undoubtedly, we have failed to implement some very clever ideas that are presently marinating in some of the more creative minds out there. Why not share those ideas with your fellow COE attorneys?

If we all pitch in, we can build an electronic Deskbook that will answer many questions that arise in our day to day practice of law. We all grouse about reinventing the wheel. Here's your chance to do something about it! If you would like to help, please contact the CEALS Project Office.

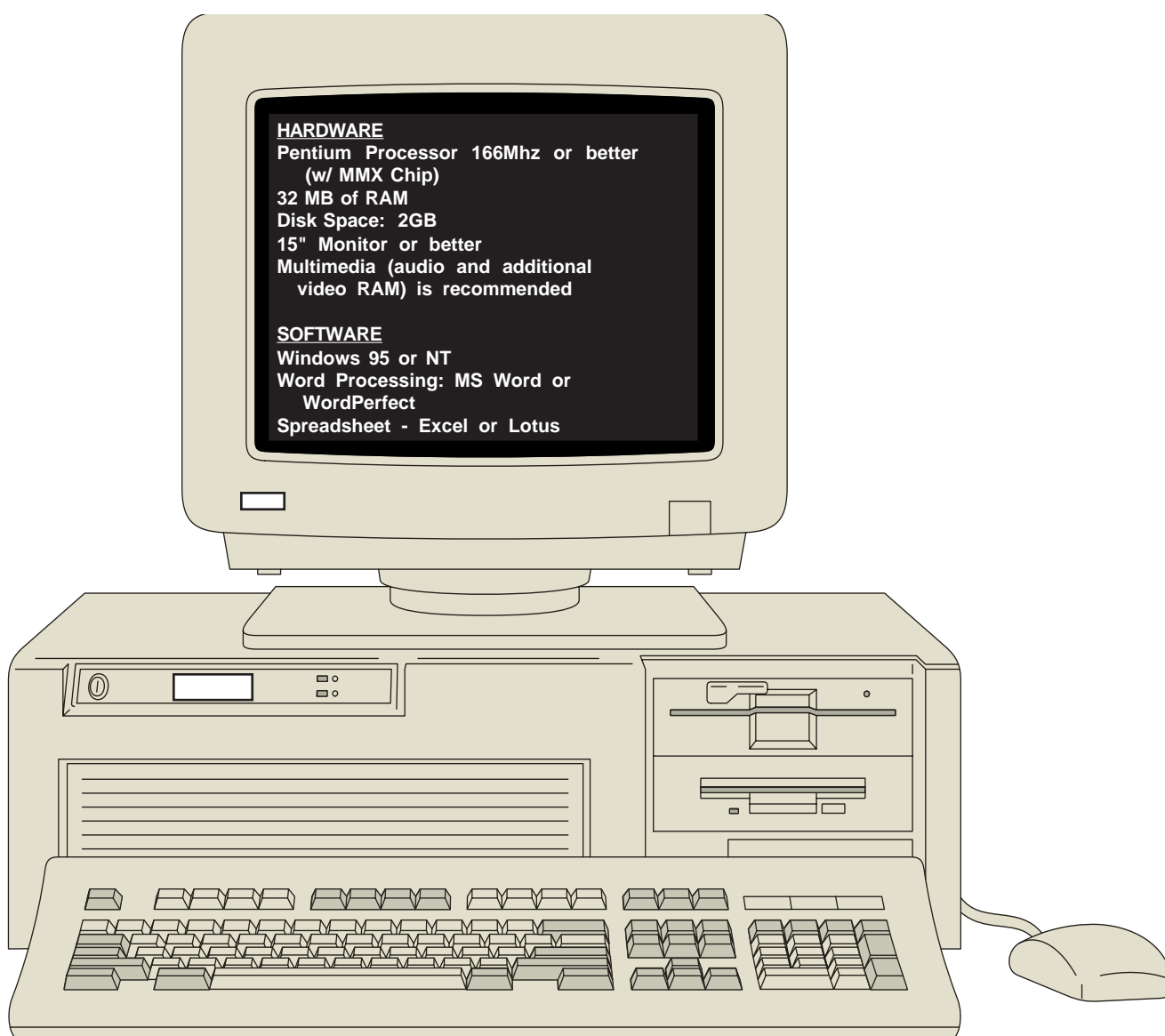




## Standard Desktop Operating Environment

Are you planning on upgrading your current computer? Listed below is the recommended "standard" environment for today's desktop PC for the working attorney. If you have the opportunity to acquire multimedia capability, we strongly urge you to do so. Today's information has gone beyond the bounds of

simple text -- we are now enjoying sound bytes and full motion video. This has opened up new avenues for training and educational purposes. Look for CEALS to soon take advantage of multimedia in providing you with even more mission-critical information.





**CEALS 2001:**

## **Countdown to Deployment**

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- ☒ October 1996: Vendor selected by Evaluation team was Law Manager, Inc.
- ☒ Friday, December 13th, 1996: Contract Signed
- ☒ March 1997: Conversion specifications provided to Vendor
- ☐ Develop menu "pick lists" for new matter types
- ☐ System testing of vendor software (Expected mid-July '97)
- ☐ Installation of new system on CEALS Host
- ☐ \*Deployment/training of new matter tracking system

\*Deployment strategies will be discussed at the upcoming Seventh Worldwide Legal Services Conference in June 1997.

